

**Making Their Mark**  
**A look at 26 lawmakers who were winners, losers, or surprises**  
**during the first session of the 106th Congress**  
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By Kirk Victor

OK, so it wasn't the most productive year in Congress. The list of what didn't get accomplished in 1999 is a lot longer than the list of what did get done. Even so, some members managed to distinguish themselves--by taking a lead role in passing legislation they liked, blocking bills they didn't, or positioning themselves for political gain. Others made their mark in surprising ways, either by pursuing policies that seemed out of sync with their images or by unexpectedly grabbing the spotlight. And, yes, some lawmakers stumbled. Several committee chairmen, for instance, failed to play a substantial role in key policy debates, despite their having the seniority and clout to do so.

What follows is a look at 26 members who could be considered winners, losers, or surprises for their performance this year. Top congressional leaders were excluded from consideration, because they handle such a wide range of issues. Everyone else was fair game. More Republicans than Democrats made the list simply because the GOP controls both chambers. That the "winners" and "surprises" far outnumber the "losers" may seem puzzling in a year when Congress didn't do very much. But even in one of the most acrimonious sessions in memory, some members were able to stand out. Winners Rep. John D. Dingell, D-Mich.

Dingell is the dean of the House, having first been elected in 1955, and this year he repeatedly showed that he remains one of its most strong-willed and effective players. In June, Dingell, an avid hunter and former National Rifle Association board member, teamed with House Majority Whip Tom DeLay, R-Texas, to shoot down gun control legislation in the House, following its passage in the Senate in May. In the process, he gave some colleagues a dose of his well-known brand of intimidation--"the Dingell treatment." He was at loggerheads with plenty of his party colleagues, but his approach also provided cover to some Democrats from rural districts, where gun restrictions are unpopular.

Dingell also emerged as a central player on patients' rights legislation, long one of his top priorities. Over the objections of GOP leaders, he and Rep. Charlie Norwood, R-Ga., steered a patients' rights proposal through the House in October on a bipartisan vote. The bill's ultimate fate is in doubt, however, because Speaker J. Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., has stacked the House-Senate conference with opponents of the measure. Even as that fight looms, it is hard to dispute that although Dingell no longer wields the gavel at the House Commerce Committee, he continues to be a force.

Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn.

One late night in October, during the frenetic negotiations over sweeping financial services reform, Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, asked someone "to get Chris Dodd" for some assistance. The comment reflected the conservative Gramm's trust in the veteran Democrat and his view that Dodd could persuade wavering colleagues and the White House to close a deal.

"Dodd is like this guy (John) Rucker out of the bullpen," said a lobbyist, referring to the baseball relief pitcher who closes games for the Atlanta Braves. Dodd came through on the banking legislation, doggedly prodding lawmakers to find common ground and finish their work.

Dodd's role in the banking reform debate was no aberration. In June, he reportedly made a call to President Clinton in the wee hours to urge him to support legislation to limit businesses' liability from computer failures caused when the calendar moves to the year 2000. Dodd won Clinton's endorsement, even though it put the President at odds with trial lawyers, a deep-pocketed Democratic constituency. In a session in which little happened, Dodd was a key player in the enactment of two major bills.

Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Va.

Goodlatte is fast emerging as a techie to be reckoned with on Capitol Hill, even though he is a social conservative whose rural, west-central Virginia district doesn't even have a major high-tech employer. He led the fight in the House to lift government curbs on the export of data-scrambling encryption technology. Eventually, the White House relented and relaxed the federal regulations. That success came in spite of fierce opposition from the FBI and the intelligence community.

Goodlatte also teamed up with Rep. Rick Boucher, a Democrat from a neighboring Virginia district, to press for the accelerated deployment of high-capacity links to the Internet in residential areas, and the two will continue their initiative next year. In addition, Goodlatte was a leader in pushing for legislation enacted this year to curb lawsuits against high-tech companies for year 2000 computer failures. Yahoo! Internet Life named Goodlatte "most Internet-friendly House member" for his work on high-tech issues.

Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas

When Gramm took the reins of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee this year, many veteran lobbyists figured the ascension of the combative, hard-right crusader would deal a deathblow to legislation to overhaul the financial services industry. The measure has been debated for decades, and the previous year, Gramm had torpedoed it almost single-handedly because of his aversion to its requirement that banks make loans in low-income areas.

Instead of hauling out the howitzer, however, Gramm used a combination of pugnacity, bluff, and wheedling to prevent expansion of "community reinvestment" obligations and to require community groups to make disclosures about the assistance they receive. In a year of few congressional accomplishments, Gramm's work on the landmark legislation stands out.

The Texan's tenacity was also evident in the final days of the session in November, when he threatened to filibuster popular legislation that would allow satellite television firms to offer local broadcast channels. He objected to \$ 1.25 billion in loan guarantees the bill would provide to induce satellite companies to rebroadcast local stations in rural areas. The leadership caved, and Gramm agreed to hold hearings and move a separate bill on the loan guarantee issue next year. It's further evidence that Gramm knows how to play hardball--and win.

Rep. Jim Leach, R-Iowa

Patience, perseverance, and pragmatism finally paid off for Leach with the enactment of sweeping financial reform legislation in November. Ever since becoming chairman of the House Banking and Financial Services Committee in 1995, Leach has fought to overhaul banking laws written in the Great Depression, but he was always stymied. His conciliatory manner in an often-quarrelsome atmosphere attracted Democratic supporters and helped to move the massive measure this year. His style was a sharp contrast to the pugnacity of his counterpart in the Senate, Phil Gramm, R-Texas. Leach ultimately prevailed on his major goal of preventing nonfinancial firms from jumping into the banking business. The Iowan's success came in the nick of time: GOP rules require that he relinquish the Banking chairmanship at the end of next year.

The low-key lawmaker also earned bragging rights for leading the effort to forgive the debts of poor countries. He worked closely with groups such as Bread for the World and, with other lawmakers, prodded the Clinton Administration to take a more progressive stance on the issue than it originally envisioned. The debt relief measure was included in the final omnibus appropriations bill.

Rep. Charlie Norwood, R-Ga.

With a heavy drawl and a backslapping style, former dentist Norwood likes to come off as an "aw-shucks, good-ol'-boy" legislator. Don't believe it. The third-term member almost single-handedly hamstrung efforts by two House committees to report managed care legislation, because he favored more-sweeping reforms. Norwood then helped defeat the Republican leaders' health care proposal on the House floor in October and won passage of his own, bipartisan, patients' rights measure.

It was no overnight effort. In 1997, Norwood asked then-Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., about the prospects for his patients' rights bill. Gingrich told him to return when he had 218 co-sponsors. Norwood says he knew that Gingrich was joking, but he took the task seriously. After he persuaded around 230 members to support his bill, GOP leaders were prodded into creating a task force.

In 1998, Norwood helped craft the GOP-backed Patient Protection Act, but when the issue fizzled, he changed tactics. This year, he blocked the House Commerce and House Education and the Workforce committees from reporting what he considered ineffective measures and joined with Rep. John D. Dingell, D-Mich., on a new bill. He was convinced that GOP leaders were not serious about the effort. "I've been in too many battles, been too many times jacked around," said Norwood. Indeed, House Republican leaders did not appoint Norwood to the House-Senate conference committee that will work on his bill next year. Rep. Rob Portman, R-Ohio Portman is a comer. The affable and low-key 43-year-old regularly attends House Republican leadership meetings, even though he does not hold an elected or appointed position. His presence reflects the confidence that House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Archer, R-Texas, have in his judgment. They regularly seek Portman's counsel on politics and policy.

Portman's stature has grown steadily since he was first elected to Congress in a May 1993 special election, but with Hastert's ascension to the speakership a year ago, he gained even more influence behind the scenes. In 1997, Portman co-chaired a national bipartisan commission on the Internal Revenue Service, and the following year he shepherded to enactment widely praised agency reforms. During last year's GOP shakeup in the House, he drew attention as a possible leader. This year, Portman helped to fill GOP coffers as a co-chairman of the annual House-Senate Republican Dinner.

With a safe seat, Portman can set his sights on attaining lofty posts in Congress. But some observers wonder whether his close ties to Texas GOP Gov. George W. Bush could lead to other perches. Portman, for his part, says he wants to stay in Congress as long as the "enormous opportunity is there to make a difference."

Rep. Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y.

Rangel, the senior Democrat on the House Ways and Means Committee, admittedly hasn't had much of an impact on his panel's usually party-line actions, other than his success in moving legislation to reduce African-trade barriers. But Rangel has played a significant role in his own party's political fortunes. By working closely with House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt, D-Mo., and reaching out to his party's moderate factions on issues ranging from taxes to Medicare, he has helped to craft the political strategy that has raised Democrats' confidence about regaining House control next year.

Rangel is an ever-available spokesman for his party and for urban America. He has been active in fund raising for Democrats across the nation, cultivating the many powerful interests with a huge stake in the tax-writing committee. Moreover, Rangel also served this year as a combined kingmaker and political adviser by repeatedly urging Hillary Rodham Clinton to run for his state's open Senate seat.

Sen. Bob Smith, R-N.H.

What an astonishing ride Smith has had this year. The first candidate to formally jump into the presidential campaign, with his announcement in February, Smith quickly became frustrated wearing the Republican label. In July, he lacerated the party during a Senate speech for abandoning its conservative, anti-abortion principles. "It's a fraud and everyone knows it," Smith said as he announced his resignation from the GOP. "Maybe it's a party in the sense of wearing hats and blowing whistles, but it's not a party that means anything."

Following that stinging denunciation, Smith continued his presidential bid as an independent. But then the death of Sen. John H. Chafee, R-R.I., on Oct. 24 created an opening for the chairmanship of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. At the time, Smith's presidential campaign was hurting financially, and he knew he would be next in line for the chairmanship with full GOP seniority. He abandoned his White House bid on Oct. 28 and returned to the Republican fold on Nov.

1--111 days after his withering attack on the party. Not only did his Senate Republican colleagues forgive Smith, they named him Environment and Public Works chairman the next day.

Only in Washington could there be such a quick turnabout in fortunes. Still, Smith's meanderings may well make it more difficult for him to keep his seat when he faces voters in 2002.

Rep. Christopher H. Smith, R-N.J.

In recent years, the annual budget face-off between Congress and the White House has boiled down to a few contentious issues. One of them has been whether the payment of U.S. dues to the United Nations should be contingent upon legislation that limits aid to international family-planning groups that advocate abortion. The Clinton Administration wants the U.N. dues paid with few strings attached. But Smith, a leading abortion opponent in Congress, wants restrictions on the family-planning money. This year's high-stakes stare-down on the issue ended when the Administration blinked.

The ultimate compromise may appear to be a small victory, but Smith and others hailed it as significant. The deal states that the United States cannot provide aid to international groups that promote abortion, but it allows President Clinton to waive some requirements. If he does, international family-planning funds drop by some \$ 12.5 million.

During this budget battle, the tenacious Smith held a trump card because the United States was in danger of losing its vote in the U.N. General Assembly if millions of dollars in dues were not paid by the end of the year. Family-planning advocates vow that next year they'll take a harder line, but Smith clearly will try for two wins in a row.

Rep. Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif.

When the Democrats controlled the House, Waxman was well-known as a champion of Medicaid expansion and environmental protection. But even in the minority, he has proved he can still drive an issue. This year, Waxman's issue was prescription drug prices.

As ranking member of the House Government Reform Committee, he directed Democratic staff aides to examine what consumers in various congressional districts were paying for prescription drugs. The studies showed that seniors and others without prescription drug insurance pay far more at the drugstore than those whose health plans include drugmaker discounts. After the first results, Democratic lawmakers lined up at Waxman's door, asking that their districts be studied as well.

"This will become a big issue when (lawmakers) wake up to the fact that this is a very difficult problem for many of their elderly constituents," Waxman predicted in an interview in 1998. "When people realize the problem, they become outraged."

As Waxman expected, the issue has resonated with the public. Members of Congress found their constituents were angry when they learned about the study's findings. Democrats won significant media play for their leadership on the issue. Prescription drug pricing may well receive congressional attention during the election year.

Losers

Rep. Bill Archer, R-Texas

Archer, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, wanted to make Social Security reform his big achievement as he entered his 15th, and final, House term. With President Clinton interested in his own legacy, Archer hoped that the legislative stars were aligned to focus on the vital problem of retirement security. But the effort never really got rolling. Archer's optimism may well have been undue from the start, given the parties' sharp divides over this "third rail" issue and the bitter residue of impeachment.

Archer believed that he had a private understanding that Clinton would lock arms with him, but the foundation for a deal had not been laid. Even his own party was underwhelmed when Archer and Rep. E. Clay Shaw Jr., R-Fla., the chairman of the Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee, sought to kick-start the discussion with their plan for limited privatization.

Archer also suffered a setback in September, when Clinton summarily vetoed the Republicans' \$ 800 billion tax cut package, which reflected the Ways and Means chairman's views. Archer is a lame-duck chairman thanks to the House's three-term lid, and lately he sounds like someone eager to begin his retirement.

Rep. Tom Bliley, R-Va.

Bliley's performance this year as chairman of the House Commerce Committee has been widely criticized. He was outflanked on some issues, disengaged on others, and unable to protect the panel's turf. Declared one veteran lobbyist: "Bliley has been rolled more than any Commerce chairman in my lifetime."

Commerce's role on managed care legislation was handed off by GOP leaders to the House Education and the Workforce Committee. (They made the switch after Bliley addressed the issue by allowing the three Republican members of his committee who are medical professionals to fashion a compromise bill that GOP leaders detested.) Meanwhile, Commerce's jurisdiction over medical records confidentiality was poached by the House Ways and Means Committee, which also rolled Bliley's committee on what should have been the two panels' shared jurisdiction over Medicare. Bliley, among others, does get credit for legislation allowing satellite television companies to carry local stations' programs, but he was largely detached from the debate on sweeping financial services reform legislation.

Bliley's autocratic style on substantive issues and his tight control over staff create lots of tension with subcommittee chairmen. His predecessor, Rep. John D. Dingell, D-Mich., also had sharp elbows, but he never allowed encroachments on his or the panel's authority. Bliley will rotate off as chairman in 2001. He says he plans to seek reelection to the House, but if he returns, he's likely to get a taste of his own medicine from the new chairman.

Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D.

It seemed like a good idea among Democrats when Dorgan took to the Senate floor on June 7 and demanded a vote by September on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. "Give us a chance to debate this treaty, and give us a chance to produce the votes to ratify this treaty," Dorgan urged. Not only did he view the treaty as essential to stopping nuclear proliferation, but he-- along with Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle, D-S.D., and Foreign Relations Committee ranking member Joseph R. Biden Jr., D-Del.--also hoped to embarrass Republicans who opposed a treaty that enjoyed broad public support. But it didn't turn out that way.

On Sept. 30, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., called Dorgan's bluff and scheduled a quick vote on the treaty. Senate Democrats and the Clinton Administration had failed to do the spadework to secure GOP backing. Instead, the Democrats were in the awkward position of trying to postpone the vote. On Oct. 13, the treaty was defeated, 48-51, far short of the two-thirds required for ratification. Some Democrats contend that Lott's gambit will sting Republicans in the 2000 campaign. Nevertheless, helping Lott to a big victory this year was not what Dorgan had in mind.

Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah

President Orrin Hatch? That those words seem so strange is no surprise. The Senate Judiciary Committee chairman astonished the political world by belatedly jumping into the race for the GOP presidential nomination, and his candidacy has gone nowhere. He got 0 percent support in a WBZ-Boston Globe poll of 400 likely New Hampshire GOP primary voters in late November. The pollsters noted that Hatch and Gary Bauer, another long shot for the Republican nomination, got 5 votes between them.

"I don't do things quixotically," Hatch insisted in an interview in September. "I do them because I believe in what I am doing. I never give up." But Hatch has never set forth a clear rationale for his candidacy other than to talk about his experience. "I understand more about how to pick judges and (about) the court systems in this country than all the rest of them put together," he said.

Still, at some point this talented legislator must face the music. A disastrous finish in the primaries would be embarrassing. And his Senate seat is up next year. "I could (run for) both, but there will come a time when I have to make a choice," he acknowledged in the interview.

Maybe now is the time.

Rep. John R. Kasich, R-Ohio

Despite his renowned high-energy level, Kasich, the chairman of the House Budget Committee, had plenty of trouble running the budget process and running for President at the same time. In the early part of the year, he was preoccupied seeking votes in Iowa and New Hampshire. Even his allies concede he did not spend as much time writing and selling a budget resolution as he had in the past. And when he did produce a spending blueprint during the spring, he had instant credibility problems with critics, who questioned whether it was a serious proposal or simply a campaign

document designed for consumption in the early-primary states. Hard feelings remained even after Kasich dropped out of the race for the GOP nomination. Some Republicans grew tired of Kasich's hard-liner budget act more quickly than they had in recent years. Kasich led the charge for across-the-board spending cuts in the last days of the budget negotiations, but those cuts became necessary--in part--because his previous attempts to sell House Republicans on other spending offsets failed. Moreover, because Kasich is retiring at the end of the current Congress, there is some question about whether he will stay focused on next year's budget battles.

Sen. William V. Roth Jr., R-Del.

In January, when Senate Republicans proudly unveiled their proposal for a 10 percent across-the-board tax cut, Roth, the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, loyally locked arms with party leaders, saying he wanted to put the money "back into the hands of the hard-working American taxpayer." But Roth showed his true intentions a few months later, when he crafted a tax cut that instead reflected his support for savings incentives. The \$ 800 billion tax cut bill that Republicans sent to the President in September retained only a thin veneer of Roth's proposal.

Then in October, Roth butted heads with GOP leaders again when his panel agreed on a package of "tax extenders" that took a status quo approach. A few days later, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., took the unusual step of offering his own extenders bill that included more-sweeping changes than Roth's package, such as a permanent extension of the research and development tax credit.

More challenges loom for Roth, 78, with the planned retirement of Finance ranking member Daniel Patrick Moynihan, D- N.Y., and the death in October of Sen. John H. Chafee, R-R.I., a fellow moderate Republican on the committee. And a recent poll provided unwelcome news that Roth trails Democratic Delaware Gov. Thomas R. Carper in an early heat for next year's Senate campaign. Still, Roth insists that reports that he will retire are erroneous.

Surprises

Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas

Though he has not attracted the spotlight during his 15 years in Congress, this year Barton engineered a rare success for the GOP by pushing a landmark bill to deregulate the \$ 200 billion electricity marketplace through the House Commerce Energy and Power Subcommittee. And Barton just became the panel's chairman in January.

With determination, optimism, and patience, Barton conducted weekly public hearings and frequent closed-door sessions on the complex issue that culminated in a 17-11 subcommittee vote for the bill in late October. During the nine- month process, Barton battled well-heeled lobbyists, the conflicting interests of panel members, and an impatient--and, at times, overbearing--committee chairman, GOP Rep. Tom Bliley of Virginia.

Critics note that Bliley is expected to make large-scale changes in the bill at the full committee, but Barton is credited by friend and foe alike for advancing the process. "I don't think too many members could have pulled that off," said Randy Davis, a lobbyist with Stuntz, Davis & Staffier. And Mark Yacker, a lobbyist for the Electricity Consumers Resources Council, which opposes Barton's version of the bill, said, "He listened to his members and proceeded at a pace that was comfortable for them." Rep. John A. Boehner, R-Ohio House Republicans ousted Boehner as chairman of the House Republican Conference in November 1998, following their party's unexpected

election setbacks. Boehner could have retreated into the realm of obscure members from safe seats who do little but show up for floor votes. Instead, he used his seniority to take the helm of the House Education and the Workforce Employer- Employee Relations Subcommittee, where he fast made the panel a player in the debate on managed health care reform.

While GOP leaders and Republicans on the two leading House committees of jurisdiction--Commerce and Ways and Means-- were thrashing about for a managed care bill that they could all support, Boehner quietly drafted his own plan and passed it in his subcommittee. But because the issue is so divisive, Boehner couldn't pass it in the full committee or on the House floor. Still, conservative Republicans credit him with crafting a measure they could tout as an alternative to the Democrats' popular plan.

His Republican colleagues were surprised--and impressed-- by how quickly Boehner resurrected himself to become a key player. Assuming the GOP retains control, his name may well surface again--either as the new chairman of the full committee or as part of the leadership team in 2001.

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine

This first-term Senator made a name for herself in 1999 with her sensible bent and moderate Republican views. In a year of bitter partisanship, she presented a studious approach to contentious matters, including the Senate's impeachment trial of President Clinton. She also began to carve out a niche as a consumer advocate.

Although Collins isn't an attorney, she set about studying constitutional law as the Senate debated Clinton's fate in January. She advanced a proposal to allow separate votes on "findings of fact" and on whether Clinton should be removed from office. Her effort failed, but she attracted plenty of serious attention and landed on the television talk-show circuit.

Moreover, Collins, from her perch as chairwoman of the Senate Governmental Affairs Permanent Investigations Subcommittee, led the successful charge for a bill setting out new rules to protect consumers from misleading sweepstakes solicitations. Her panel's hearings highlighting the vulnerability of the elderly to deceptive mailings helped to turn the tide against the industry's desire for a self-policing approach. Collins is also part of the small group of Senate Republicans fighting to overhaul campaign finance laws. Look for her profile to continue rising.

Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, R-Calif.

Cunningham, a former Vietnam Navy pilot, never saw a Pentagon budget large enough for him or the aerospace workers in his district. But this year he took a startling stance and opposed funding for the Air Force's F-22 fighter. Using his position on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, Cunningham was key in persuading the House in July to deny \$ 1.8 billion requested by the Air Force to put the aircraft into production. His priority was seeing to it that Navy and Air Force aircraft already in the air are equipped with gear to combat Soviet planes being sold to our potential adversaries.

In the end, a House-Senate conference committee agreed to a deal in which money was allotted to keep developing the F-22. But the Air Force was denied authority to put it into production until a sophisticated version of the plane passes performance tests. Cunningham accepted the compromise as making sense for the military. Asked about the talk around the Capitol that he scolded aerospace executives for their high-pressure tactics on behalf of the F-22, Cunningham smiled and said, "Naw, I'm a pussycat on the ground, but a tiger in the air."

Sen. Peter G. Fitzgerald, R-Ill.

Elected last year, Fitzgerald, at 39, is the Senate's youngest member, but his youth has not deterred him from parting company with his leaders on high-profile issues. He got plenty of heat from the CEOs of major companies in his state, as well as from the Senate GOP leadership, on patients' rights legislation--and then proceeded to side with a Democratic-backed proposal during the summer. Fitzgerald favors giving patients the right to sue health maintenance organizations, because, he said in an interview, "there is no public-policy rationale for singling out HMOs and saying they are immune from the consequences of their own negligence. That is just indefensible."

Similarly, after being pilloried in last year's campaign as a toady of the gun lobby, Fitzgerald surprised his critics by voting with Democrats in May to support background checks on purchasers at gun shows. His decision set the stage for Vice President Al Gore to make hay by casting the tie-breaking vote. "I have a very profound responsibility to represent the interests of 12 million people in Illinois," Fitzgerald said. "I'm not going to abandon or abdicate that responsibility by giving my proxy to anybody else." Look for more surprises from him down the road.

Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Wis.

Probably no congressional insiders predicted that Congress's adjournment for the year would come down to the stubbornness of

Kohl. A soft-spoken two-term, Kohl rarely seeks the limelight in a body whose members often trample one another to get to the nearest television camera. But the 64-year-old Senator became livid over a last-minute deal to add an extension of the Northeast dairy compact to the mid-November budget deal, and he threatened a filibuster until the provision was killed. At one point at session's end, leaders panicked that Kohl might even block a one-day continuing resolution and trigger a partial government shutdown.

At the time, Kohl said he did not relish the hardball he was playing. "I hate it," he told reporters. "It's not my style." But every few years he shows a stubborn streak. In 1993, he stood up to House Democrats during negotiations over the size of a gasoline tax increase. This year, Kohl backed down and agreed to allow the spending bill to pass without a filibuster. But he did win an agreement to have another examination of federal dairy policy. Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz. Kyl unexpectedly emerged as a leader in the successful Republican effort to shoot down the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. He spent the better part of a year educating himself--and then his colleagues--on what he saw as the dangers of ratification of the CTBT. Well before the Senate vote in October, Kyl convened arms control experts to meet with Senators individually or in small groups to highlight their views of serious shortcomings in the treaty, which mandates that signatories not conduct nuclear tests.

Even as Kyl was immersed in this methodical effort, Senate Democrats heightened their criticism of Republicans for failing to bring the treaty up for a vote. They were apparently unaware of Kyl's efforts and the growing opposition to ratification, which requires a two-thirds vote. When 51 Republicans voted against the CTBT, it was the first defeat of a major treaty since 1920--and a testimony to the dogged work of the first-term Senator.

Critics railed that the effort was more about conservatives' desire to embarrass President Clinton than about concern over the U.S. nuclear arsenal's reliability, but Kyl assembled an impressive crew of treaty opponents, including six former Defense secretaries. He had done his homework and outflanked the Democrats.

Rep. Frank R. Wolf, R-Va.

Wolf, the chairman of the House Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, finally scored some victories this year in his recurring dustups with Rep. Bud Shuster, R-Pa., the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Shuster has consistently outmaneuvered appropriators since the GOP took House control in 1995. Most galling, he won passage in 1998 of "budget fire walls" around highway and transit spending. But this year, Wolf fought back and won two surprise victories over the irrepressible Shuster.

Wolf succeeded in requiring spending for aviation projects to come only from the aviation trust fund--not from the general fund. He also forced the Transportation Department to move the Office of Motor Carriers, which regulates trucking and commercial buses, from the jurisdiction of the Federal Highway Administration. It will now report directly to the Transportation Secretary. Wolf argued that the OMC was lost in the bureaucracy and had been lax in enforcing safety laws. Shuster planned to oppose that move during consideration of appropriations legislation, but Wolf, with the help of GOP leaders, passed the bill early one morning in October--after Shuster was told it would not come up until later that day. "Cute moves like that have a way of coming back to haunt people," Shuster said. Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska

What could be more surprising than Young, the hard-charging conservative chairman of the House Resources Committee, linking arms with his Democratic nemesis, George Miller of California? This year, Young startled liberals and conservatives alike by working closely with Miller, the committee's ranking member, on landmark legislation that would designate more than \$ 3 billion in federal offshore oil royalty payments for federal and state



conservation, recreation, and wildlife programs. In November, the Young-Miller compromise measure won the support of committee Democrats and moderate Republicans, but was condemned by conservative Rep. Helen Chenoweth-Hage, R-Idaho, who warned that the bill would encourage the federal government to buy up large tracts of land.

Environmentalists suggest that Young is championing the measure in hopes of leaving a positive legacy when he ends his term as committee chairman at the end of the 106th Congress. But others argue that Young's support is tied to provisions in the bill that would funnel \$ 160 million a year to Alaska. Still, Young will have his work cut out for him as he strives to prevail in the end, because the bill faces stiff opposition from appropriators who worry that it would limit their ability to dole out the federal oil royalty funds.

Contributing to this report were David Baumann, Richard E. Cohen, Margaret Kriz, Neil Munro, and Marilyn Werber Serafini of National Journal; Matthew Morrissey, Brody Mullins, Stephen J. Norton, and Julie Rovner of CongressDaily; and George C. Wilson of National Journal News Service.